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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NOAA Deploys "Smart Buoy" Near Mouth of the Rappahannock River *Buoy Marks Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail*

The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office will deploy a "smart buoy" on Saturday at the mouth of the Rappahannock River to take observations of the Bay's changing conditions. A part of the Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System (CBIBS), this is the fourth interpretative buoy to mark the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail.

The buoy will be deployed off Stingray Point, near Deltaville, Va., to mark the 400th anniversary of Captain John Smith's exploration of the region. In July 1608, while using a sword to fish in shallow waters near the mouth of the Rappahannock River, Smith was stung by a stingray and nearly died. The peninsula where this incident occurred was later named "Stingray Point."

The buoy collects weather, oceanographic and water-quality observations and transmits this data wirelessly in near-real time. These measurements, as well as historical and cultural information about the Bay, can be accessed at www.buoybay.org and by phone at 877-BUOY-BAY (877-286-9229). CBIBS is the only operational buoy system in the Bay dedicated to maintaining the broad range of measurements necessary to track Bay restoration progress. Online educational resources are also available.

"These 'smart buoys' are an example of NOAA's advancements in Earth observing systems," said Mary Glackin, deputy under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere. "NOAA is working to improve our understanding of dynamic coastal areas like the Chesapeake Bay and how areas like the Bay are affected by changes in the global ocean."

Glackin and U.S. Representative (VA) Robert Wittman will participate in a deployment ceremony at Stingray Point Saturday as part of the region's commemoration of Smith's explorations during the summer of 1608. "Placement of this NOAA buoy is an important addition to the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and an important tool to gain additional scientific and ecological information about the Chesapeake Bay," said Wittman.

This is the second Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy in the Commonwealth; the other buoy is located at Jamestown, Va. Additional buoys are currently in operation in Maryland at the mouth of the Potomac River and at the mouth of the Patapsco River near Baltimore. Two more buoys will be launched later this summer on the Elizabeth River at Norfolk, Virginia and one on the Susquehanna River off Havre de Grace, Maryland.

"This is the fourth buoy in the expanding Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System," said Peyton Robertson, director of the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office. "Placing this buoy off of Stingray Point will enhance our observations of the changing conditions of the Chesapeake Bay, provide real-time information for mariners, and mark a significant spot in Captain Smith's remarkable exploration of the New World."

The crew of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Norfolk District Derrick Boat *Elizabeth* partnered with NOAA to transport and place the Stingray Point buoy at its final location. The Army Corps of Engineers also teamed with NOAA last spring in launching the first CBIBS buoy in the James River, near historic Jamestown, Va., as part of the 400th anniversary of the founding of the Jamestowne Settlement.

The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail covers 3,000 miles along parts of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries along routes taken by Captain John Smith in 1607 and 1608 to chart the land and waterways of the Chesapeake Bay. The trail highlights the natural history of the Bay and provides new opportunities for recreation, education, and tourism in the Chesapeake Bay region, and encourages stewardship of this national treasure.

The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office focuses NOAA's capabilities in science, service, and stewardship to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay.

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. Visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.

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On the Web:

NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office: <http://chesapeakebay.noaa.gov>

Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System: <http://www.buoybay.org>

Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail: <http://www.nps.gov/cajo>